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PROFESSOR KELLOGG ON FUTURE PROBATION.

In the April number of the *Presbyterian Review*, there is an able article on this subject by the Rev. S. H. Kellogg, D.D., who is well known as an author, and as a professor in the Theological Seminary at Allegheny, Pa. For the writer of this article we have the highest respect and esteem. For his fearless testimony to certain aspects of truth in relation to our Lord's coming, which are unpopular, and which find little favor and scarcely tolerance among the official guardians and exponents of the theology of his church, Dr. Kellogg commands our admiration. We believe that among the church's authorized teachers he is one of the most conscientious and devoted.

This estimate of the man only increases our regret at being obliged to find fault with his article. The article itself is indeed one of the fairest and most satisfactory presentations of the subject, *from his point of view*, we have ever read. But our regret is that a Christian teacher of the high order of Scriptural intelligence and honesty of purpose, which we cheerfully accord to Dr. Kellogg, was not able to see that there is a higher point of view for the discussion of this subject than that which he occupies, and that there are broad stretches of Bible truth bearing upon it which he overlooks.

It is because of this lower range of vision that Dr. Kellogg begins his discussion under a painful conviction that the mystery of God's dealings with mankind is impenetrable, and he finishes it with the burden on his mind and heart still unrelieved. Not so did the apostle Paul discuss these high mysteries. Dr. Kellogg appeals indeed to "his burning urgency," "if by any means he might save some" as proof that he regarded the eternal destiny of all men as depending upon their present opportunities to hear and believe the gospel. But it is also evident that whenever he rises to the discussion of these mysteries as, for example, in Romans chs. v and xi, he does not labor under the painful oppression which runs through Dr. Kellogg's article. There must be something deficient in any views of the final outcome of God's dealing with the human race which force from their advocates such sighs for relief as here find expression. Dr. Kellog's Christian heart is all the time protesting against the hard and cruel doctrine he feels compelled to accept. He writes, page 227, "We need the consolation which the knowledge of this hope would give, so often are our hearts overburdened with the inscrutable mystery of sin." "As to how our hearts would have this question answered, with the light we have, there can be no doubt. From many a soul would the burden be lifted could the assurance be given from God's Word that for all, or any who had died impenitent, there was still room for hope. Especially is this the case with regard to the heathen world. We do not wonder that so many believe in a future preaching of the gospel to these at least, if to no others." As one who had labored among the heathen

his conviction in regard to their future weighs heavily upon him.

Speaking especially of them he says, "Gladly indeed would we welcome such a doctrine. We do not wonder that so many have largely caught at such a hope. Such a truth, *if* a truth, would lift from the heart of many a thoughtful Christian a very heavy burden." (pg. 235.) But he is forced, by his view of Scripture teaching, to the "painful conclusion" (pg. 234.) that not even for the best among the heathen is there any hope, except in a diminution of their stripes. He does not believe that any of the heathen are regenerate. "Never among the heathen have we ever met, or heard of any one meeting any person who gave evidence of being born again before that they had heard the gospel." (pg. 234.) This is doubtless true. Even Cornelius needed to be told about Jesus Christ in order to be saved. (Acts xi: 14.) But it would be indeed a "painful conclusion" if we were forced to admit that the same preparedness of heart to receive the regenerating Word about Christ has not existed in the minds of many other heathen besides Cornelius, and to deny to all such, who are now debarred, any possible future chance of receiving that Word. Not under any such oppressive burden, we believe, was Dr. Kellogg bidden to go to the Gentiles to preach among them *the unsearchable riches of Christ.*

Wherein then lies the great mistake in his view? We do not propose to follow him through the details of his Scripture interpretation, because we do not believe he looks at these passages along the right plane of vision. From his point of view they plainly prove his position.

But the question we are raising is as to his point of view. It is one, we believe, which excludes certain aspects of truth which are indispensable to a right judgment. Specially it shuts out every feature of promise and every element of hope from the resurrection of any class of the dead, except the dead in Christ. This involves a defective view, 1. Of the definite penalty of sin; 2. Of the provision which God has made to recover man after this penalty has been inflicted.

1. Prof. Kellogg throughout assumes that the penalty of sin is everlasting misery and separation from God. It is no doubt true that a state of sin is essentially a state of suffering and of banishment. But this idea has been unwarrantably substituted for the death-idea, which is the central feature in all the Bible descriptions of the wrath to come. All the characteristic words which define it contain this idea. The sinner "perishes." His wages are "death." He is "destroyed," "cut off," "cast out," consigned as chaff, as a worthless branch, to the fire. The original sentence visited upon man was that he must be cast out of his inheritance of life and dominion in the creation over which God made him the head. And this abides as essentially his punishment. The sinner dies. He is unclothed, dispossessed, discrowned and banished. This destruction, we are taught, may reach the *soul* as well as the body. The outcast *spirit* indeed survives. But it is not a man, only the ghost of a man. We can hardly wonder that so many diligent Bible students have inferred from the emphasis it puts upon this idea of destruction that the punishment of sin is extinction of being. These Scriptures, however,

are just as intelligibly and more concordantly explained when we understand them as referring to a destruction *qua homo.* The sinner's punishment is that, as to his present *form* of being, as made in the image of God and capable of the highest destiny, he must be destroyed. And this punishment begins at once. No "intermediate state" intervenes. It does not await a judgment day in the distant future.

We have repeatedly insisted in these pages that this view is required by all the Old Testament references to the sinner's doom, and equally by the plainer words of the New Testament. Prof. Kellogg admits that the judgment scene in Matthew xxv, where the wicked are consigned to eternal fire, relates not to bygone generations of dead men, raised to be judged, but to nations living on the earth at our Lord's second coming. We believe the scene is a broader one than this; that it includes also the Messiah's present kingly and judicial rule, and that He is all the time sorting between sheep and goats, and consigning the wicked to the eternal fire. But the principle is the same. In Dr. Kellogg's view, as well as in ours, it is a pre-resurrection scene. But this passage is a cardinal one in any scheme of eschatology. If the casting into hell here referred to is a punishment before resurrection, then the passages in Matthew v. and Mark ix. must be also so interpreted. That the parable of the rich man, the plainest passage of all, (Luke xvi.) refers to a torment immediately succeeding death is evident upon the face of it. And on this feature of it Dr. Kellogg founds an argument.

But this view of these New Testament references to

punishment in hell, prepares the way for, and requires a different meaning to be put upon the doctrine of resurrection. Dr. Kellogg's view requires us to believe that the dead generations of mankind, the myriads of heathen over whose fate his soul is in sadness, are to be raised merely for the purpose of retribution and aggravated punishment. He thus misconceives the Scripture idea of punishment for sin, and of resurrection as a provision of God's grace succeeding to that punishment. It enters into the very idea of resurrection that it lifts man out of the pit of destruction into which his sins have cast him. It lies at the very opposite pole from death, the wages of sin, in the divine economy. Hence St. Paul can speak of even the resurrection of the unjust, (Acts xxiv: 15.) as a part of his "hope toward God," and can include in his exhibitions of the much more abounding grace of God, (Rom. v.) and of the triumphant mastery of life over death in His administrations, the promise that as in Adam all died, so in Christ shall all be made alive. (I Cor. xv: 21-23.) And it is just here that the point of view from which Dr. Kellogg discusses this subject is below the high vantage-ground of Scripture. There is a whole plane of its teaching which finds no recognition in his article. The Old Testament is full of anticipations of some great, gracious, provision of God which should bring back to the race all it lost in Adam; and by which "all the families of the earth shall be blessed." Four times is this promise repeated in Genesis. Thrice it is made to Abraham, once to Isaac. It lies at the fountain-head of redemptive history. It sparkles in and sweetens all the streams of subsequent revelation. Are

not Dr. Kellogg's poor heathen included among the "all nations." And are all the past generations of men dropped out of God's account because they are lost to human sight? Must He, to whom the realms of death and life are alike open and obedient, be limited by our poor reckonings? Will the universal conversion of "all nations" at a period many thousands of years after the words were spoken, fulfil this promise? When God says "all" does He not mean all?

Such passages bear directly upon the problem of human destiny Dr. Kellogg is discussing. He makes no allusion to them. His scheme of the future has no place for them. There are scores of passages in the Psalms and Prophets of which these first great promises are the keynote. And they are all meaningless unless their fulfilment be couched somewhere in this pregnant hope of the resurrection of the dead. Once admit that this great hope of the gospel gathers up into itself all hints and promises of hope made unto the fathers, and the whole Old Testament becomes luminous. We need not be concerned any further over proofs of its inspiration. We at once see how *all nations whom God has made* shall come and worship before Him, and glorify His name; (Ps. lxxxvi: 9.) how the vail that is spread over all nations shall be destroyed by the conquering grace and power of Him who swallows up death in victory. (Is. xxv: 6-9.) We see how it is that God can promise to restore even Sodom and Samaria to their former estate, (Ezek. xvi: 53-63.) and how it is possible for him to bless Egypt and Assyria "in that day," (Is. xix: 24-25.) and to bring back in the latter days from their captivity the dead of Israel, (Ezek.

xxxvii); Moab, (Jer. xlviii: 47) the children of Ammon, (xlix. 6) and Elam (vs. 39). And we see how it is possible for the victors on the sea of glass to gather up into one triumphal strain the notes of Moses' Song, the Song of Judgment, and the Song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of nations. * Who shall not fear thee, oh Lord, and glorify thy name? for Thou only art holy: for *all nations shall come and worship before thee: for thy judgments are made manifest.*" (Rev. xv: 3-4.)

Our complaint then against Dr. Kellogg's article is that it makes no room for all this class of Scripture teaching, which bears directly upon the problem he was discussing. No wonder that he rises from it with a spirit sad and burdened.

But it may be said, this lands us at once in Universalism. We do not believe this. But no matter where it lands us, it is a part of the teaching of God's Word on this very subject. And we must make room for it somewhere, or take up with a partial and distorted doctrine and so misrepresent our God to men. The radical defect of our modern eschatology lies in the misconception of the place and meaning of resurrection in the divine economy. We must put that doctrine in its true place and lift it out from the region of despair for the mass of mankind into that of hope. We may not see at once how to adjust it to other sides of truth. This will come in due time. But we must not ignore or deny it.

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* The reading varies here between ἐθνῶν and αἰώνων.

The two chief objections which occur to the minds of many of our readers are:

1. This hope in resurrection for all mankind is Universalism.

2. It supplies no urgent motive for the preaching of the gospel either at home or abroad. Our limits compel us to reply briefly.

1. The redemption of all mankind to life does not mean universal salvation any more than the universal possession of life in this world means it.

2. We have carefully insisted in our previous teaching upon this subject that the law of sowing and reaping which prevails in all God's realms of life, and in every sphere of His government, prevails here also. "To every seed his own body." "We must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things *in his body*, according to the things he did, whether good or bad." (2 Cor. v: 10, see Greek.)

3. There is therefore a resurrection "unto judgment" as well as unto life. (Jno. v: 29.) Only believers on the Lord Jesus rise above the region of death and judgment into eternal and glorious life. All others are still under condemnation (as men are in this life) and liable to the second death. Persistent rejecters of God's grace may be still bound in hopeless fetters. Sinners, deserving of it, may be cursed with degraded forms of embodiment, as such sinners are now. And before many such there may lie the second death from which there is no promise of resurrection. All this may be held, and all scope be given for the amplest illustration of the great principle

that men must reap as they sow, while holding also to the redemptive character of resurrection.

In regard to the second objection, that this view cuts the nerve of gospel and missisnary effort, we have to say:

1. It is founded on a low idea of what salvation consists in. If it be merely escape from punishment, then a possible hope of relief from this punishment in the far distant future might furnish some motive for delay. But if it be salvation from the sin which blasts and embitters life, and digs its own pit of hell, and which the longer it is indulged, sinks the soul the deeper into its torment and prolongs its misery there, then we can see that the one indispensable blessing for every soul of man is salvation from this curse of sin. Surely the sooner this reaches a man the better. Nor have we ever taught or held that resurrection delivers wicked men from the sin-state. On the contrary salvation from it will be as much a necessity for them then as now. And if unsaved from it, the second death will be their doom.

2. But there is a present, awful peril from which the gospel opens the only door of escape, and which no future probation can prevent. We have insisted that the punishment of sin is definitely set forth in Scripture. And it is nothing less than dissolution of being, with the torment this brings, leaving the sinner a naked spirit, stripped of his inheritance in life and manhood, and cast out into the outer darkness. Is it nothing to be saved from this peril and this doom?

3. The gospel promises an immediate deliverance from condemnation, from bondage to sin and to the fear of

death, a present possession of eternal life, peace with God and assured victory over sin and death, and a part in the first resurrection. For there is priority in time, as well as in rank and order of life in the resurrection. Who can tell how long the wicked shall be left in their dark and bitter bondage in the prison-house of hell?

4. But further, the gospel is now sent specially for the gathering out of a chosen seed from every nation, kindred and tongue. These, under Christ, the Head, and as constituting one Body in Him, are God's company of kings and priests who are to administer His kingdom of the future. They are the appointed seed in whom all the families of the earth are to be blessed. All God's gracious purposes toward mankind await the completion and perfection of this body. Have those who take this view of the church and of the future of the human race no motive, then, for preaching the gospel? How else can the number of God's elect be accomplished and His kingdom be hastened? Or through what other channel can all the blessing they hope for, for themselves, and for their brethren of the human race, ever come? Those who make this objection could never make it if they had a truer view of the purpose of gospel-preaching in this dispensation which is, first, to make ready a people out of all nations prepared for the Lord, and, second, to prepare the way for that full blessing in store for all the families of the earth, toward whom these first-born ones now hold a priestly place.

What then do we hold as to a "future probation"? We have already indicated that unsaved men pass out of

this life under a definite sentence which is not suspended, but executed. There can be, therefore, no second probation for the trial of that which is decided and for their possible rescue from a doom into which they at once sink. We find no warrant in Scripture for the prevalent views of an intermediate state of prolonged trial. Much of Dr. Kellogg's paper is directed against this notion. And we agree with his rejection of it. The question we are raising is, whether the punishment of captivity in death and hell is not the definite penalty which sinners incur, and whether, after this penalty is visited upon them and the law of God vindicated, resurrection is not an opening of their prison bars? You would not say that a prisoner who had served out his sentence is set at liberty for a second trial. Nor does his emancipation relieve him at once from the disgrace and disabilities of his former punishment. Restored life and manhood must of course bring new opportunities to death's captives. Herein lies the grace of it. It is God's provision to recover for lost man another foothold in life after judgment has done its full work upon him. What he will do with this gift remains yet to be seen. It certainly is not the gift of eternal life. Under what conditions and limitations it will be bestowed we do not fully understand. That some will again prove unworthy of it seems plain in that they suffer the second death. But this penalty will not be for the sins of this life. This first trial is over. The culprit has been judged, sentenced and executed. His new life will bring its own trial and, in case of failure, its own condemnation.

We have no sympathy then, with that mischievous

view which encourages men in the hope that, if they refuse Christ in this life, sentence against them will be deferred in order to afford other opportunities of escaping the just judgment of God. But, on the other hand, we entirely reject as false and unworthy of the God we worship, and of the Christ whom He sent to save the world, that narrow view of His redemption which makes it unable to pass these bounds of judgment, which shuts out God's love for lost men from any opportunity for its exercise after they are lost in death, which confines His promises only to living generations of men, as if the dead in His sight were not still a part of the "all nations whom He has made," and which consigns all these countless generations, past and present, who have gone or are going down to death without having heard of his saving grace in Jesus Christ, to a hopeless and unending torment and despair. And so also do we refuse that narrow view of the church, which limits its royal and priestly relations to the rest of mankind to this present *aeon*, and gives no place to the Scripture teachings which lead us to believe that the purpose of God in constituting the church into a Bride for Christ may reach even to the raising up of the name of the dead upon their lost inheritance.

It is not strictly fair to classify our doctrine under the head of "Second probation." How can there be a second chance to recover that which is finally and irretrievably lost? We have uniformly represented that before the sinner there is a definite punishment. He must lose his life and be cast out of his inheritance as was Adam. Adam had no second probation.

STUDIES IN THE BIBLE.

THE LORD SHALL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE.

These words announce a most important principle of the divine dealings. As quoted in Heb. x. 30, they appear to be wholly vindicatory. But as they first occur in the Song of Moses, Deut. xxxii. 36, they are both vindicatory and redemptive. It is a prevalent and a striking misapplication of Scripture to wrest such solemn warnings as occur in the Book of Hebrews from their use as addressed to unfaithful Christians and apply them chiefly to unbelievers. It is the Lord's own people whom He shall judge, and they are warned that "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

But it would be a still more fearful thing to fall out of His hands. There is grace concealed in even such minatory passages. *Our* God is indeed a consuming fire. (Heb. xii. 29.) And yet the fire burns up our sins, which are our greatest enemies. And all His and our enemies are burnt up by it round about. (Ps. xcvii. 3.) There is always this double aspect in God's judgments. They vindicate His righteousness and punish evil doers. But they tend also to deliver His people from the evils that make punishment necessary, Hence, it is a cause for deep thankfulness, as well as salutary dread, that "the Lord shall judge His people." And hence, as these words first occur in Moses' song, these two things are closely connected, Judgment and Deliverance.

"*For the Lord shall judge His people, and repent Him-*

self for His servants, when He seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, or left.

His judgments are a great deep. (Ps. xxxvi. 6.) And this Song shows how much more there is in them than penal visitation. They chastise His people indeed, but they reach beyond them over to their enemies, visible and invisible, and pursue their strange work until they smite even the last enemy, which is death.

And thus we see how they may be viewed as a "pleading of their cause." (Micah vii. 9.) We also see why this grateful aspect of the divine judgments is made so prominent in Scripture. In the Psalms, Zion, the nations, and the whole earth, animate and inanimate, are often summoned to "rejoice because of His judgments."

These all-embracing judgments are based upon the principle that the righteousness of Jehovah, which requires that His people suffer for their sins, must vindicate itself also against their enemies who have tempted them to sin. The fire of His anger must burn against the created system in which their spiritual enemies find lodgment, and through whose laws and forces they pursue their work of sin and death. It is only in the light of considerations like these that we can perceive the deepest meaning of such words as these from Moses' Song,

> I said, I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men: Were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely, and lest they should say, (margin,) Our high hand, and not the LORD, hath done all this." (vs. 26-27.)
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> If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me. (vs. 41.)

Rejoice, O ye nations, with His people: for He will avenge the blood of His servants, and will render vengeance to His adversaries, and will make expiation for His land, for His people. (v. 43.)

Other Old Testament Scriptures bring to view this deep purpose to plead the cause of His people. Passing by the many passages which denounce judgments upon their human enemies, we refer to such as are directed more or less plainly against the invisible enemies to whom we have referred. The "gods" of the nations who are idols, but whose worship is the worship of demons (Lev. xvii. 7; Ps. cvi. 37), "He shall utterly abolish." (Isaiah ii. 18.) It will be permitted us to observe here that the subject of "demons" and the personal existence of spiritual powers, good and evil, as connected with, and perhaps identical with, the forces of nature which idolaters deify, will be discussed further on in these studies. It will suffice to say at this point that all the Old Testament writers, and the people whom they addressed, believed in the existence of such demoniac powers. And these the judgments of God should reach. The gods of Egypt He would punish. (Jer. xlvi. 25.) Her idols should be destroyed. (Ezek. xxx. 13.) "The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens." (Jer. x. 11.) Zephaniah ii. 11, declares God's purpose to "famish all the gods of the earth," in order that men everywhere, "even all the isles of the heathen," may worship Him. Isaiah (ch. xxiv.) gives an appaling picture of the tide of judgments which should overwhelm the whole earth, ending thus, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the *host of the high*

ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in a pit, and shall be shut up in prison, and after many days shall they be visited." The phrase "the host of the high ones that are on high" is a Scriptural expression for powers that rule in the heavens. The antithesis in this passage requires this meaning. It may designate either the angelic powers, (Ps. cxlviii. 2,) or the stars, as the abode of those powers. (Isa. xl. 26.) These powers are often viewed as the beneficent agents of God's government in Nature and the almoners of His bounty. (Ps. ciii. 20, 21.) But, as objects of worship, they draw away men's faith and affections from the living God.

Hence, Israel was warned against this. "Lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun and the moon and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven." (Deut. iv. 19.) In a similar passage (xvii. 3,) these objects are called "other gods." It does not enter into our purpose at this point, to delve into the mystery of this subject, but nothing is more plain than that Scripture views this present natural system as pervaded by living powers, which the ancients worshipped as divinities. It is plain also that while the agency of these powers is in the main beneficent, it has also its hostile side toward man. Not only was he corrupted by this worship and service of the creature. But its powers are the source to him of both physical and moral evil. The sun is the mediate source of life and

light to men. But the sun also smites by day and the moon by night.

In the vast reservoir of Nature there would seem to be two kingdoms of forces, those which build up men in the strength and beauty and purity of embodied life, and those which inflame and debase and enfeeble and finally destroy this life. Whether there be indeed two hostile kingdoms, or whether these evils be due to the still untamed operation of forces otherwise beneficent, we cannot determine. But the point upon which we now insist is that such passages as Isa. xxiv. 21, bring before us the mystery, which the New Testament more distinctly affirms, that the judgments of God, in pleading the cause of His people, must finally reach and dethrone all powers in Nature which are hostile to man; which have come in, in any way, as objects of worship, and as a vail between him and God, or which have perpetuated this reign of physical and moral evil under which he has been dragged down into the mire of sin and death. "*Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts* shall reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before His ancients gloriously." (v. 23.) Too long has the true meaning of such passages been evaporated into the misty realm of figures. They affirm that deep truth of redemption, of which we found hints in the Song of Moses, that this present cosmos, with the powers that rule in it, must be held to a responsibility for the evils that have come upon the human race. The judgments of God must reach and subdue and clarify this whole realm of "the world-rulers of this darkness." (Eph. vi. 12, R. V.)

It is only from this point of view that we can grasp the deep meaning of the Old Testament promises that Jehovah shall confound and defeat all our enemies. The Song of Moses refers to a chief enemy, head of these adversaries, whom the judgments of God must finally overtake and destroy. Many later passages refer to this triumph over "the prince of this world." (cosmos.)

In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan, the piercing serpent, and He shall slay the dragon that is in the sea. Thus saith the Lord, even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered; for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children. (Ish. xxvii. 1; xlix. 5.)

The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms; and He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee and shall say, Destroy. (Deut. xxiii. 27.)

The Psalms also abound in reference to "an enemy and an avenger," (xliv. 16,) strength to subdue whom should come through the channel of this feeble human race. (viii. 2.) This enemy reproaches God's people and blasphemes His name. (lxxiv. 10.) They go mourning under His oppression. (xlii. 9.) They shall be redeemed out of his hand. (cvii. 2.) We are aware that commentators are accustomed to minify the meaning of such passages, referring them to merely human enemies. Such interpretations accord with present low views of inspiration and fall in with the arrogant pretensions of the worldly mind, which demands that all that is supernatural in the Bible shall be reduced within the sphere of its ability to comprehend. The same "wisdom" would deny that there are any references to resurrection and a future life in the Old Testament, whereas the doctrine of redemp-

tion through resurrection is the key to the whole of it. Our generation seems almost as blind to this luminous feature of these old Scriptures as were the men of our Lord's day, which knew not the Scriptures nor the power of God, and who failed to see how Moses and all the prophets taught that the Christ must suffer and die and be raised again from the dead. We expect to show, as we advance, that a vail is before the eyes of those Bible readers who fail to see that it assumes that this world, or cosmos, as now constituted, is the seat of mighty invisible foes, the roots of whose power strike deep down into the foundations of this present order, that the moral and physical evil of the world are but two sides of its one disorder, that it is therefore only a training ground for the human race, which must reach its perfection the other side of it, that God's hidden purpose is to overthrow all these enemies, and to deliver the whole creation from this bondage to corruption, to renew it and transform it into a new heavens and earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. (Ish. lxv. 17.) This purpose requires specially the casting down of the great enemy from his seats of power. The Song of Moses and all God's holy prophets anticipate this triumph. And so the Holy Spirit in Zacharias, (Luke i. 70-71,) sums up their teachings, "that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hates us." Even the judgment fires, of which the New Testament distinctly speaks, are foreshadowed in Moses' Song. (v. 22.)

Such is the wide scope of that judgment which the Lord must execute for the deliverance of His people. In in all their affliction, He is afflicted. (Ish. lxiii. 9.) And

this affliction, as we have seen, comes from the pressure of more than human enemies. Invisible powers, the very system of nature, are also responsible. And, in judging His people, He must also judge them, "A fire goeth before Him to burn up His enemies round about. His lightnings enlightened the world. The earth saw and trembled. The hills melt like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. The heavens declare His righteousness and all the people see His glory." (Ps. xcvii.) Highly poetic and figurative language! we exclaim. True indeed, but it is not fiction. The vail of figures conceals the deepest facts. The fire of God's anger shall not cease its burning until it consumes all that is evil even in the foundations of the earth and down to the lowest hell. And all this strange work of judgment is in behalf of His people, who wait for His salvation.

"*Therefore saith Jehovah, the Lord of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel. Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries and avenge me of mine enemies. . . . Zion shall be redeemed with judgment and her captives* (Young) *with righteousness.*" (Ish. i. 24, 27.)

"*Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name and to the remembrance of thee.*" (xxvi. 8.)

"*For the Lord is a God of judgment; blessed are all they that wait for Him.*" (xxx. 18.)

Heb. xii: 29 is often thus amended, "God *out of Christ* is a consuming fire." Whearas the whole of the book goes to show that God in Christ, *Our* God, is a consuming fire.

MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS.

THE ANTICHRIST.

There has been much speculation in all ages of the church concerning this mysterious personage. The term has been applied both to persons and to systems in which the characteristic traits appeared. These traits are plainly defined in the New Testament. Antichrist is one,

1. Who comes in his own name. (Jno. v : 43.)

2. He deifies himself. (2 Thess. ii : 4.)

3. He is a personification of Satan's evil working. (vs. 9.)

4. He embodies that lawlessness which is the essence of Sin. (vs. 8.)

5. He deceives the mass of mankind. (vs. 10–12, Rev. xiii : 11–17.)

6 He denies the Father and the Son. (1 Jno. ii : 22.)

7. His crowning characteristic is that he assumes to be the world's Messiah, to whom it must look for deliverance and blessing, thus denying that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, and from God, for this purpose that He might be the Saviour of the world. (1 Jno iv : 3, 14)

Many Antichrists have already come (ii : 18) in whom one or more of these traits have been prominent. Nero was a pagan, persecuting Antichrist to the primitive church. In a later age Mohammed was a false prophet, arrogating to himself the prerogatives of the true. The Papacy seated itself in the temple of God and claimed for itself the honor and obedience which are due to God

only. The godless infidels of the French revolution enthroned Reason in the place of Christ, and proclaimed it to be the World's Messiah. In our times an atheistic philosophy is setting up science as the World's Christ, and the creature, or matter, as the only God. While in the sphere of human society godless anarchists, who despise dominion and speak evil of dignities, are plotting to tear down the existing social fabric, and to build on its ruins another temple, in which humanity instead of God shall be the object of worship.

It has been a common impression among students of prophecy that some evil system, headed up in some preeminently evil person, will arise, which shall gather up into itself all these characteristics, and that this will be the Antichrist of the last days. We dare not say that this will not be the ultimate fulfilment. And yet we do not believe that such a combined and consummate embodiment of evil must needs yet be awaited, before it can be said that these prophecies are fulfilled.

St. John wrote that the Anti-christian developments in his day were so numerous and marked that Christians might know that it was the last time. (ii : 18.) It would be a great gain in our progress toward a right understanding of such prophecies, and a safe-guard against the extreme and absurd explanations into which even good men have been betrayed,* if we would learn to regard them as having primary reference to great spiritual agencies, which lie behind the outward phenomena of human

* A few years ago such a misguided interpreter published a book entitled "Louis Napoleon, the destined Monarch of the world and personal Antichrist."

life and of the world, and which express themselves through these, but whose full character does not always appear to human sight. In all ages God's purposes of blessing have been resisted by a spirit of evil, deceiving the nations and leading astray even His own people. His promised salvation has been thus delayed. This was true in all the history of the chosen seed before Christ came. It has been equally true since. God's people need to be sifted and trained for their high destiny by the severe tests to which such a parallel development of evil subjects them. Great purposes of mercy toward mankind were embodied in the Christ. A magnificient future was opened before it in His resurrection and promised kingdom. But before the final realization of these splendid prospects, the nations and the church must be tried by a further conflict with evil, and learn to estimate the the true Christ by being compelled to eat the bitter fruits of trust in a false Christ. Antichrist is therefore that spirit in the world which has ever been deceiving it with false promises of deliverance and blessing, which only true Christ has been anointed to effect. The Christ was made flesh, and is now the exalted *Son of Man.* So Satan has ever been seeking to embody himself in eminent human representatives of his power and working. These are the "many Antichrists" of whose coming we were forewarned. No single representative or system has given full expression to this whole sum of evil. But, in every sphere of human life and in every form of organized human society, some Antichrist has appeared, arrogating to himself the honors of the true Christ, and travestying His work. In the sphere of government, he

has put himself in the place of God, and claimed supreme authority over the consciences of mankind, as did Nero in the early days of Christianity. In the sphere of authoritative teaching, he has claimed the superior right to speak from God to men, as did Mahomet. From the throne of a so-called visible kingdom of God on earth, he has claimed the prerogatives of the Christ, to bind and loose on heaven and in earth, and to subject all human institutions and judgment to his control, as has the Pope. He has sought to combine the nations in some form of world-monarchy, in which the bond of union should be homage to self-interest and worldly greatness rather than to God, as under Napoleon. He has set up Ideas as images to be worshipped in lieu of Him who is the Image of the Invisible God, the First Born of every creature. Men, under his inspiration, have adored Liberty, and Equality, and Humanity, and social and scientific Progress in the place of Christ. And the masses of mankind are now looking to these divinities to break their fetters, and deliver them from the tyrannies of government and caste and priest-craft, and the oppressions of selfish capital that heeds not the cry of the poor and the down-trodden, instead of waiting for Him whom God hath anointed "to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim deliverance to the captives, and to set at liberty them that are bruised." So worshipped at these false shrines the Jacobins of the French Revolution. And so still worship the socialists and nihilists of our day, in whom this spirit of Antichrist is now embodied in one of its final and most ominous forms. And still more seductive and pretentious is the no less fatal form in which he is now seeking

to sap the foundations of all existing social order and of the Church of God, by bringing in a new religion of materialistic and social ethics which denies the existence of any Supernatural Being or order above this present order of the world, which dispenses with the idea of a God, and of a supernatural and risen Christ, and leaves humanity to work out its own salvation, with only a distant hope of success after a prolonged struggle, and no immortality of hope beyond for the multitudes who are trodden into the mire of death along the track of its progress.

In view, then, of this exhibition of his evil work along the centuries, and of his consummate daring attempt in our day to crowd back the Christ of God from the sovereignty of the world, we may surely say that Antichrist has already come. Whether he must yet be more openly and completely revealed before the consummation of the age (the "end of the world") it would be presumptuous to decide. Of one thing we are informed—his methods of working are those of consummate deceit. And therefore they must be largely hidden. We are warned that none but the spiritually enlightened will detect them. Even the very elect will be almost deceived. This would seem to bear against the theory of open and world-wide manifestation which some have coarsely and crudely insisted upon. The worship of the Antichrist, in the form of the worship of Mammon, may be even now seated in the temple of God, entrenched behind errors and false systems, and made secure by flattering appeals to human pride and self-interest, to an extent which would startle and

alarm us all, if the truth were really made apparent. A true interpretation of the great prophetic characters and symbols does not require, it is inconsistent with, their coarse literal translation into the sphere of visible events. This would defeat their very object and at once make plain what God has concealed, using them as a veil. Daniel's four beasts were not recognized among men, nor even by the half enlightened eye of God's own children, as possessing the traits which his vision ascribes to them. The beasts of the Apocalypse, the unclean spirits out of the mouth of the dragon, the great whore, and other symbols, represent great spiritual agencies, active in the world and in the church, which are not at once recognizable in the sphere of actual events. It was never meant that they should be. They represent great powers of evil as seen from the side of God, and on the high plane of spiritual vision, in which things unseen are brought to view. So with the Antichrist. On the side of God and to an anointed eye, this world-wide and mighty antagonist of Christ, may be fulfilling now the very career marked out in Scripture, deceiving all the dwellers on earth, except the chosen few, causing men everywhere to worship a false and distorted image of God instead of the true Christ, and leading them to put their trust for their own and for the world's regeneration in forms of satanic delusion, and in hopes inspired by the power he seems to possess over the realm of Nature, instead of in the true Christ, now exalted to headship over this whole system, and in "His power and coming."

How then is the Antichrist to be opposed and des-

troyed. St. Paul answers "by the spirit of his mouth, and by the manifest brightness of His presence." (2d Thess. ii: 8.) A reference to the parallel passages shows that the first of these agents is the sword of His Word. The power of that Word to kill and to make alive is beyond anything that we have ever attributed to it. It shall yet smite all God's enemies. The second of these instruments of destruction is "the manifested brightness of His presence." We have already sought to show how Anti-Christ is now present in the world, although not known as such. So Christ is now present, but the clouds conceal Him. His glory is to break through the clouds. The veil is to be rent. But it must first be pierced by the faith of those who are enabled to discern things unseen. We have been taught to wait for an absent Lord. Rather do we need to recognize His concealed presence. If we could learn to believe Him near, He would be near. The kingdom of God has delayed its coming because we have refused to believe it nigh. The church has never yet grasped the full truth of a present reigning, judging, exalted Christ. It has been the supreme effort of Antichrist to blind not only the world but the church to this great fact. Hence there has been no open-eyed vision of Jesus at the right hand of power. Nor can there be until we prepare our hearts to receive the vision. It is in this way, rather than in the way of watching the developments of evil and the portents in the political heavens, that we would urge our readers to look for and hasten the coming of the day of God. He is ready now to mainifest the brightness of His coming, if we were only prepared to receive Him. And if we

would escape the snares of that strong delusion by which Antichrist is persuading all men to believe his lie, and keep our garments clean, and be faithful stewards, approved in the day of the Master's return to reckon with His servants, we must learn to view Him, as not a distant Lord, but as just outside the door, whom the veil of our unbelief and hardness of heart has kept so long concealed. We believe that the church itself has incurred great guilt in delaying "the brightness of His coming," by not herself being prepared to meet Him. And that, so soon as she "makes herself ready," there will be manifested first in her, and afterwards to the world, such a brightness of His presence, as will not only destroy Antichrist out of the world, but shall forever bruise Satan himself under our conquering feet.

NOTES ON CURRENT OPINIONS AND EVENTS.

THE HARTFORD CONGRESS,—A conference of leading Ministers of various denominations, has recently been held in Hartford, Connecticut, in the interests of Church Union. The movement seems to have originated with certain ministers in New England, Pittsfield, Mass., being the centre of it. Leading clergymen of the Episcopal Church are taking special interest in it, among whom may be mentioned Bishop Coxe and the Rev. John Henry Hopkins. A second Congress is appointed to be held next year at St. Louis. It is most gratifying to note the occurrence of such meetings. They indicate a deepening conviction in the minds of Christians that the present divisions of the church make her an unworthy representative of her Lord before the world, and greatly hinder the fulfillment of the work he has entrusted to her hands. They show that earnest godly men are seeking to find a path out of this darkness and confusion, and that the prayer of Jesus, that all His disciples

might be one in Him, through the indwelling of the One Life, is awakening responsive echoes in many hearts.

One of the most noteworthy addresses at this convention was made by the Rev. Howard Crosby, D. D., of New York. The following extract taken, from a report in the New York *Times*, will furnish a key-note to his paper and to the general tone of the conference.

"A depraved church is a poor conductor of the gospel. Its false life will break the force of the truth when spoken, or cause it to be received with a large admixture of falsehood. A church split up into separate and hostile camps presses upon the world the gospel of unity and brotherly love. It is time that Christ was preached. Who can visit a village with a thousand inhabitants and see these Christian Church buildings in the place, each representing a denomination, each endeavoring to get away the adherents of the others, each dividing the community into social sets that look askance at each other, and not confess that the divisions of Christendom are unchristian? Such a hostility cannot be carried on in any Christian way. No ingenuity of explanation from the different tribes of Israel will remove the influence of facts. Clear as is the sin of hostile division in the church, it may not be equally clear how to be rid of the sin."

He then proceeds to lay down a few general principles in this direction.

1. The union of the churches will require us to subordinate externals.

2. The spiritual character of the churches must be emphasized. Evil characters, however high their station in life, must be excluded.

3. The grading of doctrinal truths. "There are vital truths without which a man cannot be a Christian, and there are other truths which a man may deny without comprising his Christian status. . . . By vital truths we mean those which form the life of Christian faith, as distinguished from its fullness of form."

We have expressed our hearty sympathy with this movement. It is directly in the line of motives which induced us to begin this magazine. And yet we are bound to say that it has not yet taken hold of this evil at its sources. The third general principle given above reveals the rock at which it must inevitably stumble. It is just at this point of the "grading of doctrinal truths" at which the de-

nominations separate. It is true that there has been a marked growth of Christian charity and forbearance at this point. This convention is itself proof of this. It widened its doors of admission to an extent that would have been impossible thirty years sgo. Unitarians, Universalists and Swedenborgians, took part in its deliberations, and we presume they were there by invitation. Such a recognition of bodies, a short time ago considered unevangelical, reveals a marked grading down of doctrinal truths, heretofore regarded as vital. It virtually remands the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity and of everlasting punishment into the category of non-essentials.

It is manifest to us that the unity of the body can never be effected by this grading process. All that this Congress can accomplish in this way is a more kindly feeling among those that differ. This is well. It is well also to recognize the fact that God may have something to teach His one church through sections of it heretofore considered as heretical.

But just here we meet with the specific reason why this movement must be viewed as deficient. It seems to work more in the line of smoothing down differences, than in the searching out of those sins in the whole body which produce these differences. It assumes too readily that these differences are merely intellectual. Whereas they are due to deficient spiritual life. What the whole church needs is less discussion and more humiliation and prayer. She needs to be more profoundly convinced that these divisions, and these defective views of truth from which they proceed, arise from the fact that in some way the Spirit, given to guide her into all truth, has been quenched, She needs therefore to confess the sin and shame of these divisive views, to humble herself before God on account of them, and to pray earnestly that He would reveal the way out of this confusion and enable us to see light in His light. We must learn to regard these divisions as the common sin and weakness for which we are all responsible. From this point of view we cordially approve the breadth of invitation at this conference. We would have take part in it all Christian bodies who confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, even if they do not mean by this confession all that we mean by it. All such are brethren. Some of them are "ignoran

and out of the way." Some of them are halting and diseased members in the one body. But a disease at one point, a tumor or excrescence, shows that the vitality of the whole body, in which we are all integral members, is impaired. What we need most of all and first of all is to confess this. And, we must implore God, whose Spirit is the source of all life, and health, and wisdom, and who is His special gift to the church through the ascended Christ, to so pervade the whole body that wrong views will not merely be graded down but disappear, that disease will not only be charitably endured, but cured.

We are firmly persuaded that this present crying evil of division in the one body of the one Lord will never be removed, except by a renewed and powerful effusion of the Holy Ghost. And to obtain this, what we need is not discussion, but confession and prayer. Bands of Christians of every name, who yet revere the One Name, must come together with one accord in one place to make confession for themselves and for their brethren, not forgetting those who are the most out of the way, and to pray and wait before God for such a manifestation of the presence and power of His Spirit in the whole body as shall drive away our errors and darkness and knit us all together into a true unity of faith and life in Him.

THE Brethren who insist upon the fullest meaning of the word "eternal" in Matt. xxv : 46, and who are not satisfied with any view of future punishment which limits it to an age, or to a thousand ages and who, after myriads of such inconceivable periods of suffering, insist that the lost will not yet have passed the twilight of their night of anguish, are yet ready enough to get all the relief they can to this dreadful picture by belittling the meaning of the other phrase in the description, "Eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels." They apply every allowable consideration, and some which are not allowable, to this end. In face of the teaching of 2d Peter iii, they all with one consent repudiate the idea of literal fire as an agent in the divine judgments. In this they are inconsistent. If they thin down the meaning of the "eternal fire" to a torment of the mind, they forfeit all right of complaint against those who would seek relief by pruning down the word "eternal" so as to keep it within its etymological limits. We have shown elsewhere that our doctrine is quite independent of this word. But we beg our brethren, who insist so much upon the argument based upon it, to remember that they are bound to be consistent in their interpretations, and not insist upon a literal exactness in one clause of this description which they deny in another.